TOP SECRET

EYES ONLY

HEADQUARTERS
AIR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT COMMAND
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

[redacted]

25 November 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL ANDERSON

SUBJECT: Meeting with Mr. Dick Bissell, General Flickinger and Colonel Appold

1. The following items represent the essential points covered in the subject meeting this date. Mr. Bissell indicated that his agreement with General Smart's directives to you was related to the general intent to clarify Air Force and other organizations' relations and responsibilities in the Corona Program. He felt, however, that to accomplish in detail what General Smart desires may seriously compromise the security of the program and agreed that the President might also object from a security point of view.

2. Mr. Bissell also was extremely concerned over the actions of Mr. Cesaro of ARPA, principally with regard to the most recent efforts on the part of Cesaro to set up a visit directly with Eastman, thus by-passing the Agency, BMD, and ARDC Headquarters. He suggested that you discuss Cesaro's actions with regard to the 117L Program with Mr. Dick Horner at your earliest convenience.

3. Regarding the financial situation, Mr. Bissell indicated that for the remainder of this fiscal year, the Agency's contributions in the amount of approximately [redacted] for contract purposes was assured but that the picture for fiscal '60 is not yet clarified. At this point, he also stated that it was important that General Walsh be brought in on the program in order that discussions between the Agency and the Air Force could ensue regarding the cost of processing the products of the Corona shots. This apparently amounts to [redacted] in round numbers.

4. In connection with the above, Mr. Bissell was concerned over the possible adjustments which ARPA must make regarding 117L in fiscal year 1960 since the ARPA budget ceiling is being squeezed to a figure of approximately 300 million for all space activities. This probably will affect the support that ARPA can give 117L in 1960.

5. Regarding the Smart directives, Mr. Bissell concurs that the over-all program appraisal and reports which are desired to be prepared following that appraisal be reduced in scope, that the number of individuals involved in the review or appraisal be limited, and that extreme care be exercised in the preparation of and distribution of new reports. He agreed that perhaps Colonel Sheppard (BMD), General Friedman, USAF Comptroller, General Anderson, General Flickinger and Colonel Appold would be a team of sufficient size and capability to conduct an appraisal of the program and prepare a suitable report. As a framework for this action, he released a copy of a letter to General Smart, dated 25 November 1958, which outlines Mr. Bissell's understanding of the responsibilities of the organizations concerned with Project Corona.

6. Mr. Bissell made the statement that several aspects of the 117L Program appear to be in a state of confusion and that the Air Force judgment and thinking should be submitted to ARPA in an effort to influence the follow-on 117L Program (reference here is specifically made to the proposed limited number of Atlas boosted 117L reconnaissance packages).

7. As you know, General Flickinger and I stand ready to participate in the conduct of the appraisal effort pending the outcome of your discussions with General Smart. You were also going to inquire as to the suitability of naming myself as the Washington area central point of contact on Corona matters between the Agency, ARPA and the Air Force.

NORMAN C. APPOLD
Colonel, USAF
Assistant to Deputy Commander/Weapon Systems

Original and 2 copies made.

Distr:
Original to Gen. Anderson
1 copy to Gen. Flickinger
1 copy to Col. Appold